

September 6, 2006

Columbia/Walla Walla County FSA News

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Walla Walla County Committee

Richard "Steve" Hair, Chairman
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 Steve Bughi, Voting Member
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Columbia County Committee

Mike Mathews, Chairman
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Christy Bell
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Office Hours

Monday – Friday
 8:00 AM – 4:30 PM

2006 Loan Rates

<u>Columbia</u>		<u>Walla Walla</u>
\$2.95/Bu	SWW	\$2.95/Bu
\$3.20/Bu	HRS	\$3.20/Bu
\$3.22/Bu	HRW	\$3.23/Bu
\$2.09/Bu	Barley	\$2.12/Bu or
\$87.09/Ton		\$88.34/Ton
\$5.23/Bu	Soybeans	\$5.32/Bu
\$6.63/cwt	DPeas	\$6.63/cwt

Dates to Remember:

Sept. 4 – Labor Day– Office Closed
 Sept. 30 – Final Date for
 enrollment in 2006 DCP

**Call for appointment to
 sign-up**

**Please keep us informed
 of any changes in your
 farming operation.**



STATE FSA DIRECTOR GOES TO WASHINGTON DC

Former State Executive Director of the Farm Service Agency, James Fitzgerald has accepted a position as chief of staff with the Rural Development Agency in Washington DC. Mr. Fitzgerald will oversee day to day operations of Rural Development. District Director Robert Nordstrom, from Yakima has been appointed as Acting State Director and will serve in that position until a replacement for Fitzgerald has been announced.

DC-10 Dropping Fire Retardant near Dayton



FIRES IN COLUMBIA & WALLA WALLA COUNTIES

Over the last several weeks, Columbia and Walla Walla Counties have had numerous battles with wildfires. As of the writing of this newsletter, the Columbia Complex Fire is still going strong and reported at only 20% containment. I am hopeful that some assistance may be available through Emergency Conservation Programs (ECP).

ECP is not an "entitlement" program. The intent of this program is to assist individuals significantly impacted by a disaster event. If available, funding may be available to assist with re-building livestock fencing destroyed by the fires, re-seeding grasses to help reduce potential erosion, and possible other emergency conservation programs. If you have lost fencing, and pasture due to the recent fires, please contact the County office and provide us with some 'estimates' of the amount of loss. If funding becomes available we will contact you as soon as possible with more detailed information regarding program signup.

COUNTY COMMITTEE ELECTIONS

The nomination period for the 2007 County Committee Elections closed on August 1st. The candidates for these elections will be:

Walla Walla County Candidates. Incumbent Committee member, Richard "Steve" Hair, Claudia Kelly and Kevin Kregger.

Columbia County Candidate: Jay Penner

The election will take place by mail-in ballot during November through December 4th. More information on the candidates will be provided in the next County Newsletter. Thanks to those who have been nominated and stated their willingness to serve on the County Committee.

STATUS OF CRP SPOT CHECKS

CRP spot checks are underway. Once the review has been completed you will be notified, in writing, of the results. If concerns regarding the present condition of your CRP stand are identified, you will have 15 days from the date of notification to provide the County Committee with a written response addressing the concerns. Failure to do so will nullify the previously offered extension and could also result in current year contract violations. Any work required on CRP acreage due to findings from the spot check must be completed *without* cost share assistance.

Numerous CRP fields, in both counties, were burned by wild fires prior to being inspected. CRP extensions and/or re-enrollments on these contracts will be offered with the understanding that inspections will be completed on this acreage next spring. If the spring 2007 inspections result in a finding of excessive noxious weed presence or insufficient cover, those involved will be notified by letter similar to the letter referenced above. Deficiencies will be required to be resolved or the offered extensions may be rescinded.

ANY BANKING CHANGES?

Have you changed banks recently? We have numerous program payments that will be processed in early October. If you have changed banks or made other changes to your bank account, have you informed your local FSA office of those changes? We must have your most current information if your program payments are to get to you without delay.

EQIP CHANGES

Several changes are happening this year in the NRCS EQIP (Environmental Quality Improvement Program). These include: 1) **Earlier sign up date, ranking will close on Friday, November 17**, 2) several **NEW** practices have been added to the approved practice list, and 3) the definitions for **RESIDUE MANAGEMENT No-till/ Direct Seed** and **RESIDUE MANAGEMENT Mulch Till** have been modified.

New Practices added include:

590: Nutrient Management, Basic Adaptive Management. This provides an incentive for producers to limit nutrient inputs pre-plant to not more than 75% of the estimated crop needs, then in the spring following as soil test the remainder of the yield requirement of Nitrogen is applied by spiking or injecting Nitrogen with little or no soil disturbance. This practice will set the producers up to gain maximum benefits from the CSP program for nutrient management and energy efficiencies.

345: Residue Management, Mulch Till, Organic Matter Improvement. This practice encourages and rewards those who do not meet the 329 Residue Management, Direct Seed / No-Till standard but provide a high degree of resource protection and improvement as measures the Soil Conditioning Index (SCI) within RUSLE2. To receive this incentive payment producers must agree to farm in a manner that produces an SCI of >0.2 in the 14" and lower rainfall zone and >0.4 if in higher rainfall zones. The incentive will be \$15/ acre. A Mulch Tillage system which does not use a chisel or disk (sweeps or under cutter) may receive an incentive of \$10 / ac. NO-Till and Direct Seed are provided a \$20 incentive for adoption.

595: Pest Management, Advanced Adaptive Management; Conversion to Sub-meter accuracy, Auto-Steer GPS technology.

595: Pest Management, Basic Adaptive Management; Conversion to Sub-meter accuracy, Light Bar GPS technology.

Important: NRCS must receive signed EQIP Applications before November 17!!! Please contact the Columbia or Walla Walla County NRCS staff for more information.

CROP INSURANCE AND NAP SALES CLOSING DATES

Please be aware that a number of Federal Crop Insurance (provided by private crop insurance agents) and Non-Insured Assistance Program (NAP) covered crop sales dates are upon us. September 30th is the final date to purchase coverage on many crops, including **NAP** crops such as perennial crops like forage crops and pasture. September 30th is also the sales closing date for Wheat. For information regarding 2007 crop coverage options, please contact your local Private Crop Insurance Agent.

For More Information regarding on-Line Program Availability

Please feel free to give me a call, or check out the FSA Website at: www.fsa.usda.gov. You can complete your on-line program registration by accessing: <http://www.eauth.egov.usda.gov>. Receiving your e-Authentication Account will allow you to access your program participation information, review your program payment history, enroll in the Direct and Counter Cyclical Program (DCP) or apply for loan deficiency payments. It really is quick and easy.

*As members of this Community, All of us from the Columbia and Walla County Ag Service Center THANK the local volunteer firefighters, and those who have come from 14 other states to help. Specialists from Australia and New Zealand and crews from Alberta and British Columbia have also joined the firefighting efforts. **THANK YOU!***